

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PER-01 SIG-01 A-01

MMO-01 EB-08 SCA-01 IO-13 INR-07 PM-04 CU-02

/065 W

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R 310800Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9556

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 COTONOU 0609

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AMGT, PFOR, XX, DM, US

SUBJ: PARM: ANNUAL POLICY AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT -
PARTS II AND III

REF: A. COTONOU 0607, B. CERP 0001

1. WE ARE SUBMITTING HERewith PARTS II AND III OF THE ANNUAL
POLICY AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT (PARM) WHICH SHOULD BE READ IN
CONJUNCTION WITH PART I TRANSMITTED REF A. THE RECOMMEND-
ATIONS HAVE THE CONCURRENCE OF THE COUNTRY TEAM.

2. PART II

FUNCTIONS:

(A) POLITICAL: THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES/DCM HAS PRIMARY
RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTACT WITH THE GPRB FOREIGN MINISTRY ON
MATTERS OF CONCERN TO THE UNITED STATES. THROUGH MEETINGS
WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS, AT THE FOREIGN MINISTER, DIRECTOR
GENERAL, OR DEPARTMENT HEAD LEVEL, HE MAINTAINS EFFECTIVE
ACCESS TO KEY FOREIGN POLICY OFFICIALS. HE REPORTS REGULARLY
TO THE DEPARTMENT ON POLITICAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO THE US
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AND ITS ALLIES. SINCE IN MANY INSTANCES POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
ISSUES ARE CLOSELY INTERTWINED THE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER
PERFORMS A MAJOR BACKSTOPPING FUNCTION, BOTH IN GPRB CONTACTS
AND REPORTING.

(B) ECONOMIC: ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER, AS SINGLE
SUCH OFFICER AT POST, HAS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR ECONOMIC

AND ECONOMIC/POLITICAL REPORTING. IN LINE WITH POST'S STATED OBJECTIVES AND COURSES OF ACTION, HE IS PRIMARY CONTACT WITH GPRB FOR DISCUSSION OF WORLD ECONOMIC ISSUES AND MATTERS OF UNITED STATES ECONOMIC POLICY. THROUGH HIS ROLE AS COMMERCIAL OFFICER, HE IS USG LIAISON WITH BENINESE GOVERNMENT AND PARA-STATAL AGENCIES IN COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS (USDOC PROGRAMS, ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESSMEN, ETC.). ECON/COMMERCIAL OFFICER IS ALSO VICE CONSUL AND HAS CONTACT WITH BENINESE POLICE AND IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS. HE ALSO SERVES AS BACKUP FOR AID AFFAIRS OFFICER AND ADMINISTERS EMBASSY SELF-HELP PROGRAM, WHICH PUTS HIM IN COMMUNICATION WITH BENINESE OFFICIALS IN TECHNICAL MINISTRIES AND IN THE INTERIOR.

(C) CONSULAR: THE CONSULAR OFFICER PERFORMS ALL THE USUAL CONSULAR SERVICES (VISA AND PASSPORT ISSUANCE, PROTECTIVE SERVICES, ETC). THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 160 US CITIZENS THROUGHOUT BENIN. IN THE COURSE OF CARRYING OUT HIS DUTIES, HE HAS CONTACT WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY, POLICE, AND IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS.

(D) ADMINISTRATIVE: THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER PROVIDES ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE FOR ALL AGENCIES REPRESENTED AT POST. AS THE ONLY AMERICAN IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION, EXCEPT FOR COMMUNICATIONS PERSONNEL, THIS OFFICER HANDLES THE FUNCTIONS OF GENERAL SERVICES, BUDGET AND FISCAL, PERSONNEL AND SECURITY.

B. OTHER AGENCIES

1. USIS

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DESPITE GPRB RESTRICTIONS ON FREE ASSOCIATION AND A FREE PRESS, THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER HAS SUCCEEDED IN MAINTAINING COMMUNICATION WITH THE GPRB AND THE BENINESE PUBLIC THROUGH DISTRIBUTION OF USIS WEEKLY BULLETIN, BY MEANS OF SPECIAL COMMUNIQUES CONCERNING POLICY ISSUES DIRECTED TOWARD DECISION MAKERS IN THE GOVERNMENT, THROUGH CULTURAL CENTER ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING AN ACTIVE ENGLISH TEACHING PROGRAM AND LIBRARY, AND THROUGH A COURSE IN AMERICAN LITERATURE WHICH HE TEACHES AT THE UNIVERSITY.

A RECENT USIS INSPECTION REPORT RECOMMENDED THAT THE POSITION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER BE RETAINED ONLY AS LONG AS WE HAVE THE ACCESS DESCRIBED ABOVE. WE CONCUR: IF THESE CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION ARE CUT-OFF, USIS SHOULD CONSIDER ABOLISHING THE PAO POSITION, REDUCING USIS ACTIVITIES IN BENIN TO A CULTURAL CENTER WHICH WOULD FUNCTION UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE CHIEF OF MISSION AND ACT AS A DISTRIBUTION OULET.

2. AID:

AN AID OFFICER HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE EMBASSY SINCE 1975 TO COORDINATE THE MAJOR BILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROJECTS (12 MILLION DOLLAR KANDI-MALLANVILLE ROAD AND 11 MILLION DOLLAR COTONOU BRIDGE/DAM PROJECT) AND THE VARIOUS MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS CONNECTED WITH THE ENTENTE FUND (E.G. AFRIACN LIVESTOCK PROGRAM, REGIONAL ONCHOCERCIASIS PROGRAM, ETC.). THIS POSITION SHOULD BE RETAINED THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE COTONOU BRIDGE/DAM PROJECT SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION ON 1979. AT THAT TIME A REVIEW OF PROGRAMS SHOULD BE MADE TO DETERMINE WHETHER A FULL-TIME POSITION IS NECESSARY OR WHETHER AID ACTIVITIES COULD JUST AS EASILY BE MONITORED FROM NIGER OR TOGO.

3. PEACE CORPS

AT THE PRESENT TIME THE PEACE CORPS, WHICH IS ENGAGED IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND ENGLISH TEACHING PROJECTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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SISTS OF 48 VOLUNTEERS, A PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR AND HIS DEPUTY, AND A PEACE CORPS MEDICAL OFFICER/NURSE. AS A RESULT OF POLITICAL PRESSURES AND ADMINISTRATIVE LIMITATIONS ON THEIR ACTIVITIES, VOLUNTEERS IN CERTAIN DISTRICTS ARE FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO CARRY OUT THEIR ASSIGNED DUTIES. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR TWO VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED OR HAVE LEFT EARLY AND 14 HAVE PENDING REQUESTS FOR TRANSFER OR EARLY TERMINATION.

UNLESS THERE IS A DRASTIC CHANGE IN GPRB ATTITUDES, THE PEACE CORPS SHOULD SERIOUSLY CONSIDER PHASING OUT ITS PROGRAM, BEGINNING BY ABOLISHING THOSE VOLUNTEER POSITIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN RENDERED INEFFECTIVE. IN THIS MANNER THE PROGRAM WOULD BE TERMINATED BY DECEMBER 15, 1978. PEACE CORPS DIRECTOR CONCURS.

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 PER-01 SIG-01 A-01
MMO-01 EB-08 SCA-01 IO-13 INR-07 PM-04 CU-02
/065 W

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R 310800Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY COTONOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9557

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 COTONOU 0609

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3. PART III - STATE PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS

A. REPROGRAMMING:

GIVEN THE LIMITED UNITED STATES INTERESTS IN BENIN, AS INDICATED IN PART I, AND THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE LEFTWARD MOVEMENT OF THE CURRENT REGIME MIGHT FURTHER REDUCE THOSE INTERESTS, REPROGRAMMING IS NOT A CONCERN. INSTEAD ONE SHOULD FOCUS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF POSITION REDUCTIONS.

B. POSSIBLE POSITION REDUCTIONS

1. THE POSITION OF AMBASSADOR, WHICH HAS BEEN VACANT FOR OVER A YEAR, HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY ELIMINATED FOR USE ELSEWHERE IN THE BUREAU. AS NOTED IN PART I, SECTION C, PARAGRAPH 1 (B), WE RECOMMENDED THAT THIS POSITION NOT BE RE-ESTABLISHED, AND THAT A NON-RESIDENT AMBASSADOR BE APPOINTED, KEEPING A PERMANENT CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN COTONOU. THIS WOULD ALSO ELIMINATE THE NEED FOR AN AMBASSADOR'S SECRETARY.

2. AS THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC REPORTING IN BENIN ARE LIMITED BY THE ATTITUDE OF THE GPRB, WHICH TREATS MOST STATISTICS AS CLASSIFIED DATA, RETENTION OF THE PRESENT CONFIDENTIAL

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ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER POSITION SHOULD HINGE ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A NEWLY PROPOSED COUNTRY COMMERCIAL PLAN. IF GREATER COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY PROVES IMPOSSIBLE, THE PRESENT ECONOMIC OFFICER POSITION COULD BE ELIMINATED. ECONOMIC REPORTING WOULD BECOME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHARGE, PERHAPS ASSISTED BY THE ADMIN OFFICER/VICE CONSUL.

3. IF THERE IS NO RESIDENT AMBASSADOR, AMBASSADOR'S SECRETARY, AND IF THE POSITION OF ECONOMIC OFFICER IS ABOLISHED, THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN SHOULD BE REDUCED TO THE POINT WHERE A COMBINED ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/VICE CONSUL/GENERAL SUPPORT POSITION COULD BE SET UP.

CURRENT POSITIONS: (VACANT AND TEMPORARILY ELIMINATED
POSITIONS OF AMBASSADOR AND HIS
SECRETARY NOT SHOWN. IF RESTORED
AMERICAN OFF AND STAFF FIGURES WOULD

EACH BE INCREASED BY 1)

STATE	AMEROFFS	AMSTAFF	FSL/ PROFESSIONAL	FSL/STAFF
EXEC	1	1	1	1
ECON/COMM	1	0	0	1
CONS	1	1	0	0
ADMIN	1	0	9	9
COMMUNICATIONS		2	0	0
	4	4	10	11

OTHER AGENCIES

AID	1	0	1	0
USIS	1	0	5	2
	2	0	6	2

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ALL CORE EXCEPT FOR TWO FSL STAFF DAS POSITIONS.

IF FULL-TIME ECON/COMMERCIAL POSITION RETAINED:

	FSL/ AMEROFFS	AMERSTAFF	PROFESSIONAL	FSL/STAFF
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STATE

EXEC	1	1	1	1
ECON/COMM	1	0	0	1
CONS	1	1	0	0
ADMIN	1	0	9	9
COMMUNICATIONS	0	2	0	0
	4	4	10	11

IF ECON/COMMERCIAL POSITION ABOLISHED AND EMBASSY REDUCED
TO "BARE BONES" OPERATION:

	FSL/ AMEROFFS	AMERSTAFF	PROFESSIONAL	FSL/STAFF
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EXEC	1	1	1	1
CONS	1	1	0	0
ADMIN/ECON	1	0	,8	8
COMMUNICATIONS	0	2	0	0

3 4 10 9

NOTE: ALL AMERICAN PERSONNEL UNDER THIS "BARE BONES" STAFFING
PATTERN WOULD HAVE TO BE FULLY EXPERIENCED AND QUALIFIED PRIOR
TO ARRIVAL AT POST.
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